**Minutes**

**Virtual MSC meeting – SOUTH/WEST Essex**

**Thursday 2nd July 2020**

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In our final MSC meeting of the week we were hot on the heels of our MID students by following this up with our students from the South and West combined, which turned out to be our best attended virtual meeting yet! Like the other meetings we started by chatting about school wellbeing and what would make a difference when more children come back. A range of ideas including more social time, children to have a buddy or mentor, mindfulness activities, a chance to try things such as yoga and meditation and preparation on what school will look like when children are back so children also know how to follow the rules. A school added that they have already started to develop transition booklets to support some of that feedback. We will be using some of this feedback in part of our mental health report.

Following on from this it was great to welcome Harlow College into the meeting and we moved to our second agenda point which was all about homelessness. We asked the group to think of ideas that could support and raise awareness and they want to see things such as food banks set up in schools, assemblies to raise awareness that it could happen to anyone, challenge the misconceptions of ‘silly’ and ‘smelly’ and invite people in to talk about their own personal experiences. We will be combining these ideas alongside ideas from other areas of Essex and look at what we could do as a group moving forward into the next academic year.

Finally, we had the chance to discuss our podcast and what the children would like to see included in any future episodes. This could also include anyone they think would be good to feature on the show and I did ask if there would be any children in the future who could speak out. Ideas included;

* More content on mental health and mental health first aid
* Anxiety and depression
* Chris Packham
* Seeing the positives in disability
* Growth mindsets
* Refugees
* Athletes

We are working on some targets right now and we hope to follow up on as many of these ideas as possible!

We still handed out our star of the meeting at the end and this went to Xander from Ivy Chimneys who spoke well about his idea for more mental health content on the podcast! We are not setting any follow up points from this meeting for schools as we know they already have enough to think about right now, but we do hope to get our face to face meetings back in the new term, if things are safe to do so. I will also begin working on some of these areas. We also asked the group if they liked meeting this way and there was lots of support for holding these meetings virtually which was echoed in other strands too so we will be looking at a future ‘creative approach’. However, the face to face meetings are still important too as they break down many perceptions. The next meetings are planned for; **Monday 23rd November, 10am – 11:30am – (Basildon strand) Venue TBC**

**Tuesday 24th November – 10am – 11:30am (Harlow strand) Pear Tree Mead Academy**

**Friday 27th November – 10am – 11:30am (Brentwood strand) Larchwood**